



**United States Department of Justice  
United States Attorney's Office  
District of Minnesota**

**Rachel K. Paulose, United States Attorney**

Jeanne F. Cooney, Director of External Relations  
(612) 664-5611; after hours, call (651)757-7567

# **News Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Elzahabi Convicted of Possessing Fraudulent Immigration Documents**

Minneapolis - Late this afternoon in federal court, Mohamad Kamal Elzahabi, age 44, of Minneapolis, was convicted of possessing fraudulent immigration documents. The jury's verdict followed a four-day trial before United States District Court Judge John R. Tunheim. The jury deliberated for about eight hours before rendering its decision against Elzahabi, who is also known as Abu Kamal al Lubnani.

Following the conviction, United States Attorney Rachel K. Paulose said, "The outcome of this case reflects justice. The integrity of our immigration and citizenship documents must be maintained. In this post-9/11 world, the security of our country depends on it. The U.S. Attorney's Office will prosecute those, like Mohamad Elzahabi, who commit fraud to obtain and immigration documents."

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Court documents and evidence at trial showed that on September 6, 2001; September 21, 2001; and February 7, 2002, Elzahabi used an alien registration receipt card, commonly referred to as a “green card,” as evidence of his eligibility to stay and work in this country. That card, however, was obtained by fraud. Specifically, the card was authorized because of Elzahabi’s 1984 marriage to a U.S. citizen. That marriage occurred, however, only after Elzahabi paid a dancer at the Pink Pussy Cat Club in Houston, Texas, to become his bride for the sole purpose of evading immigration laws and obtaining an alien registration card. Elzahabi never lived with the woman as her husband, but he made statements to the contrary on his immigration petition.

Elzahabi faces a maximum potential sentence of five years in federal prison on each of the three counts of possession of false immigration documents filed against him. His actual sentence will be determined and imposed by Judge Tunheim at a sentencing hearing, not yet scheduled.

This case was the result of an investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Citizenship and Immigration Services, the Minneapolis Police Department, the Boston Police Department, and the Matagorda County Sheriff’s Office in Texas.

Upon hearing about today’s conviction, Claude Arnold, Special Agent in Charge of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office of Investigations in Bloomington, Minnesota, said, “As a member of the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force, ICE has the expertise and authority to investigate immigration fraud. This is an important contribution, as vulnerabilities in our document and benefits systems can create threats to national security.”

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This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Anders Folk and U.S. Department of Justice Trial Attorney John Van Lonkhuyzen.

Elzahabi also faces two additional charges for making false statements to federal agents. These charges may be tried at a later date.

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